

Amendments to the Drawings:

The sheet of drawings attached in the Appendix includes changes to FIG. 2. This sheet replaces the original sheet. The lead lines for reference numbers 22, 26, and 35 have been adjusted to more clearly indicate the different tubes. No new matter has been added.

REMARKS

The Examiner's comments from the final Office Action mailed September 18, 2007 have been carefully considered. Claims 1-5, 8, 13-17, and 19-23 remain pending in the application. Claims 1, 8, 13, 16, 17, 21, and 23 have been amended. Support for these amendments can be found throughout the specification and figures. The specification has been amended to cancel the benefit claim of U.S. Patent Application Ser. No. 09/860,744, filed May 18, 2001. No new matter has been added.

Reexamination and allowance of the pending claims are respectfully requested.

Priority

The specification has been amended to drop the benefit claim of U.S. Patent Application Ser. No. 09/860,744, filed May 18, 2001. No new matter has been added. In accordance with MPEP 201.11, it is Applicants' understanding that a supplemental combined declaration need not be filed and no additional action is required to delete the benefit claim. If Applicants' understanding is incorrect, then it is requested that the Examiner contact the undersigned.

Objections to the Drawings

Formal objection has been made to the drawings under 37 CFR 1.84(p)(4) because reference character 22 indicates both the inflation tube and the inflation lumen. The Examiner also requests clarification on which line in FIG. 2 refers to which tube. Applicants assert the objection is overcome.

The specification consistently uses reference number 22 to indicate the inflation tube and not the inflation lumen. A replacement sheet including FIG. 2 is being submitted herewith to increase consistency between the specification and the figures. In particular, the lead line of FIG. 2 has been adjusted to clearly point to the inflation tube. In addition, the lead lines corresponding with reference numbers 22, 26, and 35 have been adjusted to clarify which lines refer to which tubes. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the objection to FIG. 2.

Formal objection has been made to FIG. 4. In particular, the Examiner has requested clarification as to whether FIG. 4 illustrates the same embodiment as FIG. 2. As noted on page 2 of the Office Action, the drawings differ from one another. FIG. 4 is a schematic view of a catheter including a bond portion.

Claim Objections

Formal objection has been made to claim 16 due to a lack of antecedent basis. The Examiner's comments have been considered and appropriate correction has been made. Claim 16 has been amended to change the term "lumen" to "tube." Withdrawal of the objection and allowance of claim 16 are respectfully requested.

Formal objection has been made to claim 17 due to a lack of antecedent basis. The Examiner's comments have been considered and appropriate correction has been made. Claim 17 has been amended to change the term "lumen" to "tube." Withdrawal of the objection and allowance of claim 17 are respectfully requested.

Formal objection has been made to claim 21. The Office Action asserts the use of the word "distance" is unclear. In particular, the Office Action asserts a reference point is not provided to indicate from where or to where the distance is being measured. Applicants respectfully disagree.

However, claim 21 has been amended to clarify that there is a spacing between where the proximal tube portion connects to the three-way bond and where the distal portion connects to the three-way bond. Withdrawal of the objection and allowance of claim 21 are respectfully requested.

Formal Rejections

Claim 8 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. The Office Action asserts the specification only specifies the distance between the branch exit port and the distal end extends between 50 and 150 centimeters. The Examiner's comments have been considered and appropriate correction has been made. Claim 8 has been amended to recite the second distance (i.e., between the branch exit port and the distal end) as being between 50 and 150 centimeters.

Substantive Rejections

Claims 1-4, 13-19, 21, and 22 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over EP 0 897 700 to Wilson. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

Claim 1 recites, in part, a branch guidewire enclosure coupled to a channel at a branch exit port.

Wilson does not disclose or suggest a branch guidewire enclosure coupled to a channel at a branch exit port. Rather, a positioning guide wire lumen 55 in Wilson couples to a catheter 50 at a location removed from the port of the guide wire lumen 55. Furthermore, no reason is provided in Wilson or elsewhere to couple the positioning guide wire lumen 55 to the catheter 50 at the port. In fact, none of the drawings in Wilson show the positioning guidewire lumen 55 (or the positioning guidewire lumen 39) as coupled to the catheter 50 at a port of the positioning guidewire lumen.

For at least these reasons, Wilson does not anticipate and would not lead a person skilled in the art to the invention of claim 1. Claims 2-4 depend from claim 1 and are allowable for at least the same reasons. Withdrawal of the rejection and allowance of claims 1-4 is respectfully requested. Applicants do not otherwise concede the correctness of the rejection and reserve the right to make additional arguments if necessary.

Claim 13 recites, in part, a three-way bond that extends from a proximal tube to a proximal open end of a first tube and to a proximal open end of a second tube.

Wilson does not disclose or suggest a three-way bond that extends from a proximal tube to a proximal open end of a first tube and to a proximal open end of a second tube. Rather, Wilson discloses a positioning guide wire lumen 55 that couples to a catheter 50. The proximal open end of the positioning guide wire lumen 55 is free of the catheter 50. Accordingly, the bond does not extend to the proximal open end of the positioning guide wire lumen 55.

For at least these reasons, Wilson does not anticipate and would not lead a person skilled in the art to the invention of claim 13. Claims 14-19, 21, and 22 depend from claim 13 and are allowable for at least the same reasons. Withdrawal of the rejection and allowance of claims 13-

19, 21, and 22 is respectfully requested. Applicants do not otherwise concede the correctness of the rejection and reserve the right to make additional arguments if necessary.

New Claims

Claims 28-31 have been newly added. Support for these claims can be found throughout the specification and figures, e.g., in FIG. 2. No new matter has been added. To the extent the above rejections apply to claims 28-31, Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

Claim 28 recites, in part, a bond portion having a proximal end connecting to a proximal tube at a distal end of the proximal tube. The bond portion also has a distal end that connects to a first distal tube at a proximal open end of the first distal tube, and that connects to a second distal tube at a proximal open end of the second distal tube.

None of the cited references disclose or suggest a bond portion having a distal end that connects to a first distal tube at a proximal open end of the first distal tube and that connects to a second distal tube at a proximal open end of the second distal tube. For at least these reasons, claim 28 is allowable over the cited references. Claims 29-31 depend from claim 28 and are allowable for at least the same reasons. Examination and allowance of claims 28-31 are respectfully requested.

Conclusion

In view of the above amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully request a Notice of Allowance. If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would advance the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,
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